**A Psalm of Prayer, Praise, & Petition** (Part I)

***Psalm 25:1-7***

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Introduction: This psalm of David is in the form of an acrostic (each successive verse beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet), with minor exceptions. Why acrostics? “The effect is beauty, order, memorability, & a sense of thoroughness (‘A to Z’)” (Grace & Truth Study Bible). David wrestles with the burdens of this life, not avoiding them but rather affirming His dependence upon God through them. In so doing, he offers up prayer, praise, & petition to the God of his salvation. The immediate context is not known, but it is suggested that it was written during the time of Absalom’s rebellion against his father David. It is considered to be one of the Penitential Psalms. Spurgeon comments, “It is the mark of a true saint that his sorrows remind him of his sins, & his sorrow for sin drives him to his God.” We will look at this psalm over the next 3 weeks as I divide the psalm: the prayer of David (:1-7); the perspective of David (:8-14); & the plea of David (:15-22). Let’s read the first 7 verses & then pray.

 I. David’s **place** of trust (:1-3)

 A. Note his **persona**l relationship:

 1. Compare verses 1-2, 6-7.

 a. “What a mercy that the Lord will condescend to hear our cries in time of trouble,

 although we may have almost forgotten Him in our hours of fancied prosperity”

 (Spurgeon).

 b. *“Lift up my soul”* – Typical Hebrew posture in prayer was for one to stand & lift up one’s

 hands & eyes to heaven. “I will also lift up my soul, my heart to Thee; I will address my

 sincere prayers & make known my hearty desires, expecting an answer of peace” (Plumer).

 Spurgeon adds, “It is but mockery to uplift the hands & eyes unless we also bring our souls

 into our devotions.”

 2. Consider Psalm 27:1, 4 & note an example in I Samuel 30:6 (& contrast Psalm 24:4).

 B. Note his **perspective** relationship:

 1. The other kings of David’s day were treated as “gods” (Pharaohs; Emperors, etc.).

 2. The humility of David is indicated here & also in Psalm 8:1-9.

 a. He prays that he *“not be ashamed”* – not confounded or overwhelmed; disgraced.

 b. He prays that his enemies *“be ashamed”* – confounded, put to confusion.

 II. David’s **prayer** for truth (:4-5)

 A. *“Lead me in Thy truth”*

 1. The word *“lead”* suggests a child being led by the hand.

 2. The word *“truth”* speaks of being led to a knowledge of the truth – cf. II Tim. 3:15.

 a. The proper start – *“from a child.”*

 b. The perfect Scriptures – *“holy Scriptures.”*

 c. The personal Savior – *“wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*

 Summary: “We cannot at all times discern the path of duty, & at such times it is our wisdom to

 apply to the Lord Himself. Frequently the dealings of God with us are mysterious, & then also

 we may appeal to Him as His own interpreter, & in due time He will make all things plain.

 Moral, providential & mental forms of guidance are all precious gifts of a gracious God to a

 teachable people” (Spurgeon). See also John 7:17.

 B. *“Teach me”*

 1. This implies a child who is yielded in his heart.

 2. This indicates a child who is led to trust in the truth.

 Note: A slight distinction between *“lead”* & *“teach”*? See verses 12 & 14, *“fear Him.”*

 Summary: His prayer is “Teach me to understand what I may know of Thy providential dealings

 & instruct me in the straight ways in which Thy pious & faithful servant should walk. It is

 therefore a great matter to be preserved in God’s truth, & to receive instruction from heaven”

 (Plumer).

III. David’s **plea** for mercy (:6-7)

 A. He pleas for God to *“remember”* >

 1. His *“tender mercies”* – translated elsewhere as “pity, mercy, bowels, compassions.”

 2. His *“lovingkindnesses”* – translated elsewhere as “mercy, kindness, goodness, pity, favor” [the

 Hebrew word is *“hesed”* – “loyal, steadfast, or faithful love & stresses the idea of a belonging

 together of those involved in the love relationship” (Ryrie).]

 3. *“For they have been ever of old”* – from everlasting; an appeal to the Lord’s unchangeable-

 ness (Malachi 3:6) & His inexhaustible love (Jeremiah 31:3).

 B. He pleas for God to *“remember not”* >

 1. *“Sins of my youth”* – these *“sins”* speak of missing the mark or losing one’s way. “It denotes

 primarily the failures, errors, lapses, of frailty; & so is naturally applied to the thoughtless

 offences of youth” (Kirkpatrick).

 2. *“Nor my transgressions”* – these *“transgressions”* speak of rebellions, “and denotes the

 deliberate offences of riper years” (Kirkpatrick).

 Summary: *“For Thy goodness’ sake”* – “God’s mercy is rich, free, infinite, unchanging. This is

 the kind of favor needed by sinners in all their straits” (Plumer).

Conclusion: Can you claim these verses for yourself tonight? Is your prayer that of David – *“Lead me in Thy truth, teach me…”*? Do you claim the promise to David – *“the God of my salvation”*? And are you waiting on the Lord as did David – *“on Thee do I wait all the day”*? The key words here are: truth, trust, & trial. Here we see David’s supplication (his prayer), his salvation (his promise), & his sufficiency (his provision). Scroggie writes: “Always place God between you & your troubles & enemies.”

 Next week we will consider verses 8-14 to see David’s perspective on the Lord’s instruction, His compassion, & His revelation. But for tonight, is the Lord your place of trust? Is this your prayer for truth (*“Lead me”* & *“Teach me”*)? And do you have a similar plea for mercy? In the words of the song writer, will we “Take time to be holy”?